Hospitality of Jama'at England and Valuable Exhortations to Visitors

(Friday Sermon delivered on 17.9.1982 at Fazl Mosque London)

After tashahhud, ta'awwudh, and recitation of Surah Al- Fatihah Hadur said:

Though not accustomed to address such gathering in English but for the sake of those natives and some of the visitors abroad who cannot understand Urdu, I have elected this day to address you in English.

Also I have in mind those children, though born of Pakistani parents but unfortunately they have chosen to remain ignorant of their mother tongue; to that extent at least, that they cannot follow ordinary speeches delivered in Urdu. And again more unfortunately so, they some time take pride in this, while this is a fact, of which one should be ashamed. There is no pride in not knowing any thing, least Urdu or any other language. But it is a question of

shame if one does not learn his own mother tongue. It's a case of a complex; they call inferiority complex. So Ahmadis are expected to rise above these things. Their pride lies elsewhere, not in such small things. So, I hope in future local community would take care of it that all boys and girls, born of Pakistani parents, are made to learn Urdu properly and well in addition to ordinary knowledge of Urdu they should be given a background knowledge of Urdu literature as well, and again they must be well-versed in the literature of Hadrat Masih-e-Ma'ud ﷺ. So special care must be taken towards this.

Now I come to the question, which is of temporary importance but still it needs to be mentioned, that we begin first by expressing the deep sense of gratitude to the local London community, who have offered their homes in a great spirit of Islamic hospitality to all the visitors, who have come from abroad. They are taking care of them, despite the fact that the houses are generally small here and, according to the local customs, there are not many baths and toilets. So they have to undergo some real hardship entertaining particularly those who are not related to them. For their sake they'll have to face some difficulties and problems because in a family if you have some guests then your relationship, naturally toilets cause a main problem. Apart from that they have no servants, while in many eastern countries even to the middle

class servants are available to do the washing etc after the food, if not for the cooking, at least. So there are many problems attached to this way of life, and keeping them in view, their hospitality (becomes) achieves their greater status and we must (be), in proportion to that, be more thankful to them.

Although in Islam the traditional concept of a guest is for three days at the sunset of the third day or let's extend it to the sunrise of the fourth day, the normal tradition, all responsibilities of the hospitality end, but in the case of London Jama'at it is extended to some times two weeks because people who come from Pakistan or some other foreign countries they think that the money they have spent on fare is not well paid, not paid back if they return after a few days. So naturally, because of that and because of their desire to see England, they have to extend their visits, with the result that some times three days get extended to three weeks and still the local people cope with that and some times weeks get extended into months and, instead of the sunrise of the fourth day, new moon of the fourth month still finds the guests well entrenched in their houses.

And yet as I have told you and I feel, they show immense patience to them and they show immense kindness. They suffer a lot at their hands and they don't utter a word of complaint. But it should be kept in mind by those who visit here that Islamic concept of good conduct is not a one-way traffic. Both the parties have their responsibilities

and they must see to it that they fulfil the responsibilities which fall to their lot. So the guests also have responsibilities. They must see to it that they are properly fulfilled. They must not be a burden. They must not trespass upon the hospitality of a kind gentleman and if they forget this, they will create many problems for the future of the Jama'at, as such, because this organization of this tradition of Ahmadis, visiting other places for the sake of Allah, is not a short-lived affair. It's not a transient phase; it is to be with us for ever and for ever. So we must not injure this best tradition of hospitality by taking undue advantage of people's kindness. That must be kept in mind. But I have other things to say and remind those who come here.

It has been reported, particularly about three months ago. Just by chance it was reported to me by some one, who had visited London, that although the majority of those who are hospitable, who offer sacrifices, who are forwarding the community they are at silent work, they don't give voice to their complaints. Yet there is a minor local community in London which gives voice to their complaints with a greater vengeance and they start talking about such misbehaviour of visitors and so on and so forth, which brings shame to the countries of their origin. So this is why I have taken up this matter. Although apparently it pertains only to London but it is by addressing you, in fact I am indirectly addressing the whole community out there. I have told you: though

apparently a short-lived problem, it's not a short-lived problem. It is going to injure the cause of Ahmadiyyat in the long run, if we do not pay attention to these small things. But more than that it has also been brought to my notice that some people borrow money, with promises of returning the money shortly after they return, but their shortness gets extended like their visit here. Instead of a few days or weeks it gets extended into months and years some times. This is a shame. This is what I call enormity. This must not be tolerated. This is paying them back in a very bad coin, to say the least.

So I warn all the visitors to behave correctly. If they cannot give them any reward, and no reward is expected by their hosts, at least they should behave like human beings; they should behave like gentlemen; much more so we should behave like Muslims, like the followers of Holy Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (peace be upon him). This is what I expect of them; not to fall below the human level. That is a shame and this is what I call falling below the human level, to draw the best benefit of somebody's hospitality and then asking him for some money because he's short of money. This exchange problem and this and that and telephones and so on and so forth and then forgetting about it; not to pay it. It becomes a very great crime if such a thing is done by some body who is related to Hadrat Masih-e-Ma'ud ﷺ. And it particularly hurts me to think that any one related to Hadrat

Masih-e-Ma'ud ﷺ comes and behaves in this manner because then the reflections do not end there, they go beyond and the name of my beloved Imam, Hadrat Masih-e-Ma'ud ﷺ is also taken in such behaviour, although not meaningfully to attack him but, through the reflection, of course, his name is injured and that is what hurts me the most.

So particularly I warn those belonging to Hadrat Masih-e-Ma'ud's ﷺ family to behave properly, not only to behave properly with equity and justice but also realize their status. The flow of beneficence is accepted to be from their direction to other direction, not the vice versa. This is where their honour lies. This is what is expected of them if they are related truly to Hadrat Masih-e-Ma'ud ﷺ, with a double bondage but if they don't pay heed to it they'll be answerable to Allah, and I inform you, all of you, not to extend any undue kindness, not to grant to their demands from now on except by the permission of your Amir. I am doing it because I know that in the past some misbehaviour has got bad name to the family and to late Hadrat Khalifa tul Masih Thalith (III) and such incidents so deeply hurt me because they hurt the name of Masih-e-Ma'ud ﷺ. That simply cannot be tolerated.

So I bind you not to give any loan to any member, particularly belonging to Masih-e-Ma'ud ﷺ, his family, without prior permission of the Imam, Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad Sahib. If he deems it

necessary he would consult me otherwise it will be his responsibility. He'll be answerable before me if any mishap then follows. You, perhaps think that it is a small affair; it is not a small affair; it's a very big affair and the result and effects are wide spread and they are talked about and they injure not only the name of Hadrat Masih-e-Ma'ud ﷺ unduly but it injures the standard of devoutness of each Ahmadi who comes across such things. They spread abroad. They are given free publicity, though partly in hushed tones, may be somewhere in louder tones, some where else but such things are made subject of discussion. I know that, and as a whole it brings down the standard of the community and its devotion and its very act of sacrifices. So how can I call it a small thing? It's a very big thing.

If Sheikh Sahib consults me about such deals because they happen. It's not inhuman, immoral or unislamic to be in need of some money temporarily; it can happen. Hadrat Muhammad ﷺ himself had to borrow money but what is obnoxious is not to pay back in time while you can. You remain sticking to your old standard of your life and forget about your responsibilities to others. Why should somebody earn for you? Why should he put in hard labour for your sake? It's not an easy life here, I know. They have to earn money through blood and toil and sweat, and some body else comes and softly asks him for a small amount or a big amount and disappears with it. That is shocking. That is what I

call inhuman behaviour. So it must not happen. If after this warning some body is defrauded or somebody is deprived of his rightful earning, then it is his own responsibility. Then he loses the right to discuss such a thing in public because I have given him warning.

And secondly if after consulting me Sheikh Sahib permits someone to offer a loan to any visitor, then it'll be my personal responsibility I assure you, I'll pay it back if somebody doesn't keep his promise. So that is fair enough deal, quite straightforward and honest. So you behave like straightforward honest people and nothing will انشاءالله تعالى go wrong with you or with the community's affairs in the long run. That is highly important. These small things are not small. This is what is in fact most important in the making of a community. Clean, neat dealings, simple easy life, reliable words. These are the features which make a community or unmake it when (and) if ignored. And I hope that by paying attention to these small things انشاءالله تعالى we'll gain a status where you'll be fit for taking the next jump towards the higher steps to which we are ultimately going انشاءالله تعالى.

That gives you help, that gives you readiness, a clean society, a normal way of life, a simple way of life where truth is honoured where words are honoured, where one knows that I am being cared for by others, not that I'll be deprived of my rightful earnings. So these things give confidence and more

impetus to the people to take a higher jump in the future. So this is why I am paying more attention to these things because I know for the creation of health this is highly important. If you are suffering from a headache, this is a small thing, not a disease which kills you more often, I mean very rarely one gets killed by headache but then it is a sign of some deeper disease. I am talking of normal headache, but a small headache can ill dispose some person in a manner that all the pleasures of his life are taken away from him. He can't enjoy his food; he can't enjoy his company; he can't enjoy any thing which ordinary human beings would ordinarily enjoy so much. So this is what ill health is. It takes the desire from you to go forward and lead your normal life. So if the community suffers from ill health, however small the disease be, these diseases must be cured because ultimately such diseased people cannot travel towards their goals with as robust and healthier steps as they should normally.

May Allah bless you all, may Allah remind those who are coming here to fulfil their responsibilities and may Allah give them strength to fulfil their responsibilities. It's far better to lead a life of simplicity, being deprived of such pleasures of shopping and luxurious things as are available to any other. Much easier, much better and in the long run a much happier course to follow than that of buying things at others' expense, enjoying life at others' expense and leave a cursed name behind. Leave

good memories behind, such memories that people should remember you with love and tenderness in their prayers and should like you to repeat their visits; not that they should wish to Allah that they'll never come again; not that they should pray that I may not encounter such a person again. And also a name if it is defiled, related to Hadrat Masih-e-Ma'ud ﷺ that is impossible for me to bear. This must not happen. So please help me in doing this. Your love of Masih-e-Ma'ud ﷺ demands this discipline. You help the relatives of Masih-e-Ma'ud ﷺ behave like this, not through discourtesy but through firmness and discipline and correct behaviour and correct word of admonishing. This is how you will express the best of love which you cherish, to Hadrat Masih-e-Ma'ud ﷺ. Not the other way round.

So may Allah help us to discharge our duties and may Allah reward you all. The Ahmadis of London, to undergo such hardships for the sake of visitors, only because they are brothers in Islam, they are followers of Masih-e-Ma'ud ﷺ. And out of your love for Ahmadiyyat you are undergoing all this struggle. May Allah bless you and may Allah reward you! Assalam o 'alaikum.

If there is one gentleman by the name of Steel, whom I promised that I'll give him opportunity to come closer and touch my hand at time of Bai'at, he should please step forward. Mr. Steel; a young man, student of University here, he bowed to me that he wants to become a Muslim. But also he expressed desire that I should give him opportunity to touch me during Bai'at. Because I made a promise to him, so if he is here, he can come forward please, otherwise I think my letter may not have reached him in time. (Where ever you stand, put your hand and there is no more here)

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